



A new genus of cardinalfish from tropical Australia and southern New Guinea (Percomorpha: Apogonidae)

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Abstract

Ozichthys is described as a new monotypic genus, type species *Apogon albimaculosus*. This species is restricted to tropical Australia and southern New Guinea. The combination of first dorsal fin with VIII visible spines, fused first and second hypurals, epineural on ninth rib, ossified lower preopercle edge, serrated edge of the preopercle, more than three flute canals on post orbit, 23–24 pored lateral-line scales, elongate last lateral-line scale, and sixteen rows of free neuromasts on principal caudal fin-rays will identify this genus from other brownish ground-colored apogonids. This genus is placed in the clade with *Apogonichthys*, *Foa*, *Fowleria*, and *Neamia* based on color patterns present on the head, body and vertical fins and in having a single pore above and below the raised median canal on each pored lateral-line scale.

Key words: systematics, morphology

Introduction

Apogon albimaculosus Kailola 1976, a species previously of uncertain generic placement, is re-described as the type of a new genus. Kailola discussed the puzzling character complex and decided to leave the new species in the broad genus *Apogon* Lacepède 1801, subgenus *Nectamia* Jordan 1917, noting that this species did not belong in the subgenus *Apogon*. Decades later a number of subgenera of *Apogon* have been elevated to genera. These include Randall (2005) and Allen & Erdman (2012) for recognition of *Ostorhinchus* Lacepède 1802 as a genus with more than 90 species (Mabuchi *et al.*, 2014), Fraser (2008) for recognition of *Nectamia* as a genus with nine species and Fraser & Allen (2011) for recognition of *Apogonichthyoides* Smith 1949 with 19 species. *Apogon albimaculosus* was not placed in any of these genera, but by Kailola's general placement would technically reside in *Ostorhinchus*.

Fraser (2010) placed *Apogon albimaculosus* in *Foa* Jordan & Evermann in Jordan & Seale 1905 in a material list as *Foa albimaculosa* without comments. Allen and Erdmann (2012) provided a painted illustration from an earlier publication and Kuitert and Kozawa (2001) provided a CSIRO color photograph from Port Hedland, Western Australia.

There are no unique characters in common between *Apogon albimaculosus* and the genus *Apogon sensu stricto* or *Ostorhinchus*. Fraser and Randall (2011) provided the first comprehensive summary of characters shared by species of *Foa*. Based on a comparison with *Apogonichthys* Bleeker 1854, *Foa*, *Fowleria* Jordan & Evermann 1903, *Neamia* Smith & Radcliffe in Radcliffe 1912, *Apogonichthyoides* and *Vincentia* Castelnau 1872, a new genus is described for *Apogon albimaculosus*. Kailola's description is supplemented with new information.

Methods

Methods for meristic data and measurements are given in Fraser (2005). Proportions are given as a percent of standard length. Acronyms used to designate institutions and collections cited follow Fricke and Eschmeyer (2014). Internal characteristics are taken from the cleared and stained specimen and radiographs. Canal flutes were

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